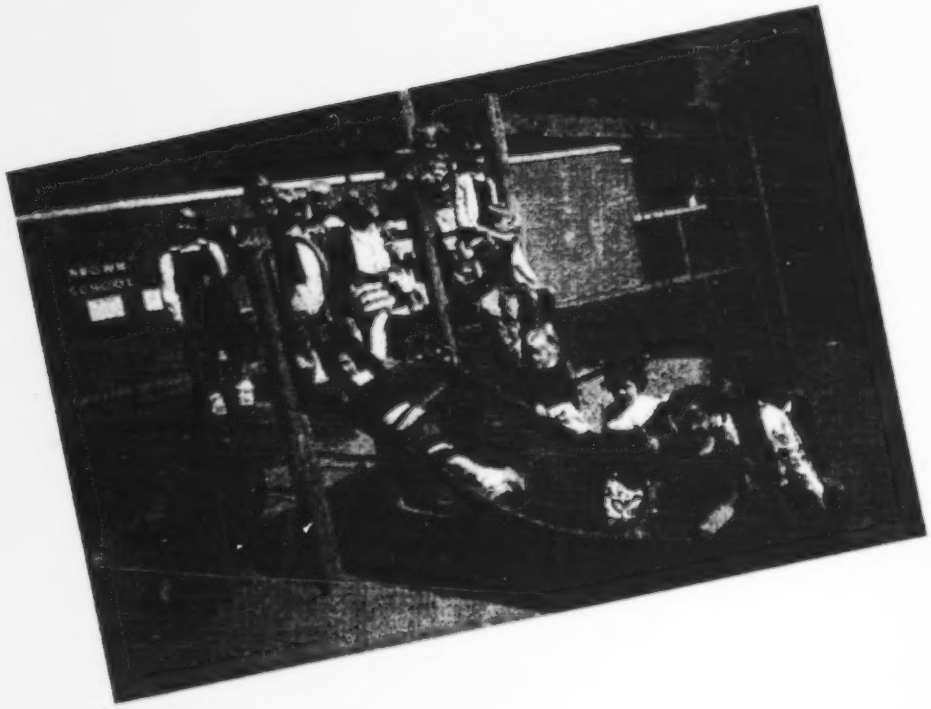
Special Education Policy Manual



Nova Scotia
Department of
Education and Culture

Special Education Policy Manual

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Nova Scotia

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Department of
Education and Culture

Office of the Minister

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Message from the Minister

It is my pleasure to present the province's first *Special Education Policy Manual*. It incorporates the work of many Nova Scotia partners represented individually and through, school boards, universities, government departments, agencies and organizations.

This Special Education Policy Manual is intended to guide and further promote the development of educational programming for students with special needs. It is an important step in ensuring all students receive programming to meet their needs throughout the province. It is supported by Bill 39, *An Act Respecting Education*, which promotes the principle of inclusion, builds on the strengths of partnerships and enables parents to participate in individual program planning as part of school program planning teams. The *Special Education Policy Manual* will provide a valuable resource for educators committed to improve educational opportunities for all students.

John MacEachern

Published by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture
Honourable John MacEachern, Minister
Robert Moody, Deputy Minister
Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 1996

(Amended October 1997)

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The Department would also like to thank the countless people, agencies and organizations who responded to this manual's initial draft with comments and suggestions. The following committee members are commended for their dedication and commitment in the development of this Policy Manual.

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Preface

The purpose of this manual is to outline Department of Education and Culture policy with regard to the education of Nova Scotian students with special needs in the primary, elementary and secondary school system in the Province of Nova Scotia. It is intended to assist school districts in the development of policies which direct the delivery of programs and services to students with special needs.

Each section is preceded by background information which provides the rationale for the policies. Guidelines and procedures follow to further elucidate the policy. The policy may be a legislated or regulatory requirement, or an expectation of school districts, or it may identify the need for the development of policy. Each policy is referenced to a legislative authority where applicable and cross referenced to relevant documents that may assist school districts in developing and/or reviewing policies. (Appendix i: Definitions) Unless otherwise specified, the term "regulations" is used in this document to refer to the regulations made by the Governor in Council or the Minister.

Overview

The Department of Education and Culture recognizes and endorses the basic right of all students to full and equal participation in education.

> *Every individual is equal before the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.*
>
> Charter of Rights & Freedoms, 15(1)

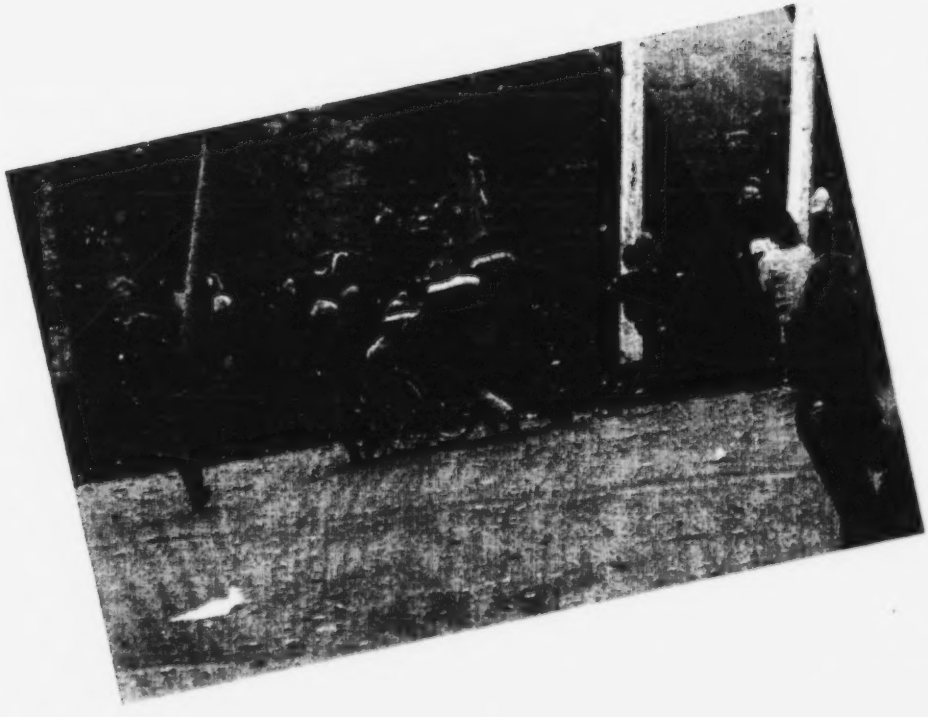
This right is reflected in the Regulations of the Governor in Council pursuant to the Education Act and is supported from a programming perspective in *Public School Programs 1993-1995*. In preparing all students for lifelong learning, the Department of Education and Culture states:

> *all children in Nova Scotia need a broad based, quality education. Quality in education is demonstrated by the excellence of individual courses, programs and shared experiences. Quality is also demonstrated by the diversity of educational experiences in which students are actively involved and by the extent to which individual student's needs are met.*
>
> Public School Programs, 1993-95

This quality education is characterized by six essential graduation learnings which all students are expected to strive to achieve (*Public School Programs, 1993-95*, pp. 3-6). These broad outcomes can be reached through many avenues using a wide variety of strategies and resources.

Essential learnings form the foundation for lifelong learning and provide parents, school communities and the general public with general expectations which all students work toward. It is our responsibility as educators to ensure that students receive the necessary support, encouragement and guidance to achieve goals within these broad outcome areas.

Statement of Principles



Right to an Appropriate Education

A right to an appropriate education means the fundamental educational human right of every individual to have their unique learning needs responded to on an individual basis.

Right to Quality Education and Qualified Teachers

All students have a right to be taught by licensed, qualified teachers who are responsible for ensuring that the objectives of the program match, as much as possible, student strengths and needs.

Inclusive Schooling

"An inclusive school is a school where every child is respected as part of the school community, and where each child is encouraged to learn and achieve as much as possible...a place where all children could learn and where differences are cherished for the richness that they bring" 1(Appendix iv: Statement on Integration).

The goal of inclusive schooling is to facilitate the membership, participation and learning of all students in school programs and activities. The support services that are designed to meet students' diverse educational needs should be coordinated within the neighbourhood school and to the extent possible, within grade level / subject area classrooms.

[1]*The Working Forum on Inclusive Schools, Creating Schools for all Our Students: What 12 Schools Have to Say,* CEC, 1994.

Teachers Responsibility

Teachers are responsible for all students who are placed under their supervision and care. This includes responsibility for safety and well being, as well as program planning, implementation and evaluation.

Parental Involvement

Parents have an obligation and a responsibility to be an integral part of their child's education and should be involved in program planning from the outset.

All students are expected to achieve the common essential learnings as stated in Public School Programs, 1993-95 to the best of their individual abilities. Within the broad outcome areas each student's goals will reflect the diversity of their individual strengths and needs.

Individual Program Plan and Accountability

For some students, individual program plans are necessary (Policy 2.2). The development and implementation of Individual Program Plans (IPP's) strengthens student/teacher accountability. Students work toward goals outlined in the IPP and this forms the foundation for the evaluation of student outcomes. The evaluation of outcomes is a component used in measuring school success; however, many other variables will need to be considered.

Collaboration

Collaboration and consultation is essential in supporting students with special needs to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to program planning and service delivery.

1.0

Student Services and Supports

Background

> ***The Department of Education and Culture will focus on provincial matters, working towards equity in education for all students wherever they attend school.***[2]

The Department of Education and Culture established a Division of Special Services as part of its Program Branch in October 1992. The division, now entitled "Student Services", is responsible for planning and co-ordinating special education programs and services for the public school system in order to maximize learning opportunities for students with special needs in Nova Scotia. The responsibility for policy development is shared between the Department of Education and Culture and school boards.

> ***Specifically, school boards will be responsible for regional management, policy development and operational issues...***[3]

School boards provide the programs and services necessary to meet the needs of all students within their jurisdictions. Support services may be required by any student at any point during his or her school life and should be designed to be flexible enough to accommodate a wide range of needs at any given time. This necessitates a service delivery model that emphasizes team work, collaboration and co-operation in responding to student needs. A proactive approach in working with students with special needs encourages consistency and comprehensiveness across settings:

> ***The school's function is to do all it can to inspire its students with the desire to achieve the highest degree of excellence that is possible for them . . .***
>
> ***Thus, each school has the responsibility to provide a learning environment for each student that encourages growth and development in all aspects of learning.***[4]

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[2]*Expanding Horizons,* Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, June, 1995.
[3]*Expanding Horizons,* Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, June, 1995.
[4]Public School Programs, 1993-95, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.

Policy 1.1

The Department of Education and Culture is responsible for establishing policies and guidelines regarding programming and services for students with special needs.

1.1 Guidelines

1. The Department will carry out policy directions of the government and Minister of Education and Culture and co-ordinate with other departments on delivering related services to students, particularly for students with special needs.

2. Departmental policies and procedures are under continuous review and are updated as required. This policy manual replaces the following: *Administrative Handbook - Special Education*, Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1980; P & R Release "Policy Statement on Special Needs Placement," Nov. 8, 1988; P & I Release "Definition of Students with Exceptional Needs," Aug. 25, 1992; and P & I Release "Administration of the Special Education Grant to School Boards," May 21, 1993.

3. A Committee on Special Education Programming and Services (SEPS) provides support to the Department of Education and Culture to help ensure that the needs of students with special needs are represented. (Appendix ii: terms of reference and membership)

4. The Division of Student Services maintains a database of the number of students receiving special education services as well as the number of personnel involved in the delivery of those services.

5. The Division of Student Services meets regularly with school board supervisors of special education/student services to facilitate effective and comprehensive programming for students with special needs.

1.1 **Education Act:** Section 145 (1)(i)
Other References: P & R Release, Statement on Integration, Department of Education and Culture, November, 1991. (Appendix iv)

Policy 1.2

The Department of Education and Culture and school boards are responsible for ensuring that all new school buildings or major renovations of existing buildings provide equal access for all.

1.2 Guidelines

1. The Department of Education and Culture assists school boards by providing capital grants for renovations to make existing buildings accessible. This funding is available through the Facilities and Planning Division by application on an annual basis, and is allocated on a priority basis to school boards. (Appendix iii: Emergency Funding Criteria)

2. Attempts should be made to make existing buildings accessible where possible.

3. School boards are responsible for developing emergency/evacuation procedures with particular reference to students who are unable to independently follow standard emergency procedures.

1.2 **Education Act:** Sections 64 (e), 87 (1)(c)
Other References: Sections 15, 16 (1) C, 4, Building Code
Facilities and Planning Grants/Policy/Procedures, Department of Education and Culture.

Policy 1.3

In addition to general formula funding, the Department of Education and Culture provides a grant to each school board to assist with the costs of programming and services for students with special needs.

Guidelines

The Department of Education and Culture provides a nonglobal grant to assist school boards with the costs of providing programs and services for students with special needs.

Procedures

1. Students for whom special education funding may be used

The funds provided through the special education grant shall be used to supplement the cost of programming and provision of services to students whose special needs are such that they require supports in addition to those provided by a classroom teacher. The funds shall be used for students who are assessed as having any of the following exceptionalities:

- cognitive impairments
- emotional impairments
- learning disabilities
- physical disabilities and/or other health impairments
- speech impairments and/or communication disorders
- sensory impairments-vision, hearing
- multiple disabilities
- giftedness

The preceeding descriptors should not be used as labels for individual students. Student strengths and needs must be the basis for developing appropriate programs, and descriptors should be used only as necessary for administrative purposes related to funding and data collection.

2. Personnel

In order to provide these programs and services, boards may charge against the special education grant the salaries and fringe benefits of:

1. persons to direct, develop, implement and evaluate special education programs and services;
2. special education/resource teachers;
3. school psychologists;
4. speech-language pathologists;
5. teacher assistants;
6. others as approved by the Minister.

Salary and benefit costs of these personnel may be prorated on the basis of the percentage of time spent in providing special education programs and services.

School boards may enhance programs and services for students with special needs by co-operating with other school boards or agencies in the sharing of personnel, provided that they are personnel within the above categories.

3. Travel

Boards may charge to the special education grant travel costs for personnel listed above who are required to travel from school to school to provide programs and services for students with special needs. Travel costs shall be determined in accordance with board policy.

4. Equipment and Materials

Boards may use funds from the special education grant to purchase or rent specialized equipment and materials (not normally provided for regular school programs or individual students) required to optimize the learning of students with special needs. This grant is not to be used to purchase medical supplies, such as syringes, drugs, catheters, walkers, etc. General supplies and materials typically required in classrooms are not eligible.

5. Transportation

No part of the special education grant may be used for transportation of students with special needs.

School boards are reminded that funds available for special education cannot be used to fund programs provided through the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority.

1.3 **Education Act:** Section 72

Policy 1.4

The Department of Education and Culture monitors and reviews matters affecting the educational progress, health and comfort of students.

1.4 Guidelines

1. The Department of Education and Culture consults and collaborates with school boards in the review of programs and services for students with special needs. This is effected through reviews requested by school boards and through ongoing audit and data collection procedures.

2. Procedures for the provision of medication and health care during the school day are outlined in a Department of Education and Culture Publication & Reference Release, "Medication/Medical Treatment in Public Schools", (Appendix iv: P & I Releases)

3. Guidelines for the transportation of students with special needs are outlined in the *Handbook for Transportation of Students with Special Needs in Nova Scotia*. The handbook describes procedures for assisting students with wheelchairs and other mobility aids, provides guidelines on the communication of student information and confidentiality and gives a general overview of challenges and disabilities. School boards should make the Handbook available, not only to student transportation carriers in the province, but also to school staff and to student services departments.

   Whenever possible, school boards should make provisions for the transportation of students with special needs with their age peers.

1.4 Education Act: Sections 68, 142

Policy 1.5

School boards are required to provide an appropriate education for all students who reside within their jurisdiction who are of school age.

1.5 Guidelines

1. In order to provide a quality education for all students, school boards are strongly encouraged to appoint administrative personnel at the district/regional level to provide leadership and professional development in programming and service delivery for students with special needs. The Department of Education and Culture recommends that personnel have expertise in:

   a) establishing and maintaining effective ways of identifying students with special needs;

   b) assessing students' needs to determine what kinds of programming and services should be provided for them;

   c) planning and organizing a variety of interventions or program alternatives for students with special needs;

   d) developing and implementing individualized program plans and transition planning;

   e) coordinating the resources needed to deliver comprehensive programming;

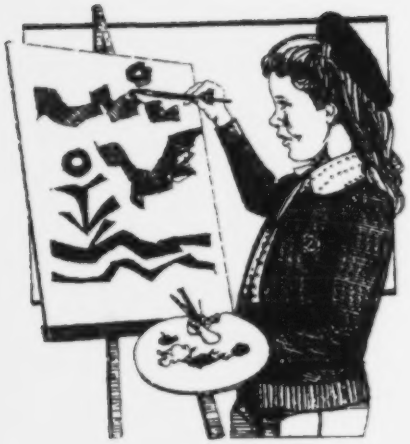
   f) coordinating the efforts of all those who are engaged in meeting the needs of students with special needs;

   g) involving community representatives in program planning, to ensure their understanding and support;

   h) consulting with and mediating among diverse stakeholders, parents, advocacy groups;

   i) conducting programs for staff development such as inservice and continuing education programs.

2. School boards are strongly encouraged to appoint teachers with competencies in teaching students with special needs (e.g. resource teachers/special education teachers) and to utilize the expertise of other professionals such as speech-language pathologists and school psychologists to provide professional assistance in assessment, program planning, implementation and professional development. (Appendix viii: Competencies: Teachers of Students with Special Needs.)



1.5 **Education Act:** Section 64
Other References: *Public School Programs*, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95
Council for Exceptional Children Standards for Professional Practice, 1992
The Knowledge and Skills Needed by Master Teachers in the Area of Assessment, CEC, 1993

Policy 1.6

School boards are responsible for designating administrative responsibility for special education programs and services at the superintendency or assistant superintendency level.

1.6 Guidelines

Through the proactive participation of a person with responsibility for students with special needs at the superintendency level, the funding, planning and implementation of programming and services for students with special needs are established as priorities throughout the school board.

1.6 **Education Act:** Sections 39 (2)(f), 64 (l), 68, 72.
Other References: *Public School Programs*, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.

Policy 1.7

The Department of Education and Culture maintains a Learning Resources and Technology Division. The division can assist in the design, production, acquisition, evaluation and distribution of non-print learning resources to support programming and services for students with special needs.

1.7 Guidelines

The Learning Resources and Technology Division offers a variety of supports and services to the school system including a library, media production services, demonstration centre (microcomputer multimedia, etc.), and educational software reports. (Appendix v: Learning Resources and Technology)

1.7 **Other References:** *Educational Software Evaluations Report*, Department of Education and Culture
Catalogue of Video Loan & Duplication Titles, Department of Education and Culture
Guides for Video Series, Department of Education and Culture

Policy 1.8

Each school board shall develop and maintain a written policy and procedures to ensure that programming and services are designed for students with special needs.

1.8 Guidelines

1. The policy shall:
   - ➤ clearly define a commitment to the provision of services to students with special needs in keeping with the intent of provincial policies;
   - ➤ state the current philosophy of the board regarding the education of students with special needs;
   - ➤ outline programming and services available for students with special needs and procedures for accessing programming and services;
   - ➤ outline a mechanism for reviewing the policy as required and at least every five years;
   - ➤ include an appeal process established by the board within the parameters of the provincial policy.
2. The policy should be circulated to every school in the board and be accessible to parents and agencies who may request it. Appropriate inservice and communication with parents and agencies should accompany implementation of, and additions to, the policy.

1.8 Procedures

1. The development of a policy manual should be the responsibility of the Special Services Supervisor and Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent responsible for special education.

2. The manual should be developed through the collaborative effort of a team of people who are stakeholders in special education programming and services; e.g. parents, teachers, representatives of health and community services agencies, support personnel.

3. The school board is responsible for approving the policy manual.

4. At least one copy of the school board's policy manual should be placed in each school.

5. A copy of the school board policy should be sent to the Director of Student Services, Department of Education and Culture for reference purposes.

1.8 **Education Act:** Sections 25, 64 (d)(u), 145 (i)(k)
Other References: P & R Release, Statement on Integration, Department of Education and Culture, November, 1991. (Appendix iv)

2.0

Programming

My teacher is so stubborn! She is told that I am unmotivated.
But she invites me anyway.
She is told that I don't want to learn.
She invites me anyway.
She is told that I don't have the ability.
She invites me anyway.

She is told I just want to cause trouble.
She invites me anyway.
She invites me again, and again, and again.
She fills my world with invitations.
One day, I'll take the greatest risk of my life.
I'll accept one, and see what happens.[5]

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[5]Purkey, W.W. and Novak, J.M. *"Stubborn Teacher", Inviting School Success: A Self Concept Approach to Teaching & Learning.* Wadsworth Publishing Co., Belmont, California 1984. Used with permission.

Background

Over the last 15 to 20 years provincial program guides and handbooks in the area of special services have addressed, in part, various aspects of the program planning process. This section provides an overview of the stages and components of program planning that should be considered for students with special needs.

In the past, the focus of the assessment process has often been to provide direction and confirm placement decisions. In more recent years, school boards have begun to focus on examining individual strengths and needs for the purpose of guiding the development of goals and objectives to meet these needs. The student's program is the central focus around which other decisions revolve, such as determining the environments in which the students will learn. Preparing all students for a lifetime of learning requires appropriate programming in a variety of educational settings.

There is a growing awareness of global interdependence among peoples and nations. Nova Scotia's future is becoming more reliant upon partnerships and collaboration. To function successfully in this changing environment, all students in Nova Scotia need a broad-based, quality education. Quality is demonstrated by the diversity of educational experiences in which students are actively involved and by the extent to which individual student's needs are met. (*Public School Programs*, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95) Quality in education is also demonstrated by the excellence of individual courses, programs and shared experiences.

In order to facilitate these types of experiences, the Department of Education and Culture supports an inclusive approach to the education of all students.

Following is a commentary on inclusive schooling which outlines the factors and practices involved.

The goal of inclusive schooling is to facilitate the membership, participation and learning of all students in school programs and activities. The process by which this goal is achieved is complex and is dependent on a number of factors for its success:

- understanding of and commitment to an inclusive philosophy at all levels of the education system. (This entails an acceptance of all students, a belief that all students can learn, and a social ethic of acceptance of diversity.);
- leadership at the board and school level to bring about a collaborative culture within schools and between schools and communities and other agencies to address the needs of students;
- public awareness strategies that explain the philosophy of inclusive schooling and showcase exemplary practices;
- the early and ongoing involvement of parents/guardians in the educational programming for their children;
- the provision and creative use of supports for teachers and students.

Implementation of inclusive schooling requires a continuing collaborative effort among all partners in the education process: parents, community, schools, boards, health and community service agencies and government departments.

The vision is to have all Nova Scotian schools embrace and practise inclusive schooling. In such schools:

- a focus on outcomes (Appendix i: Definitions) is emphasized, establishing expectations that all students work toward in a variety of ways;
- there is an emphasis on activity-based, small group work where students interact with each other;
- classroom teaching and management strategies are flexible enough to provide for short-term interventions which may involve individual or small group work in other settings;
- creative use is made of human resources to assist and support students (e.g. peer helping, tutoring and mentoring programs);
- school teams meet regularly and use a collaborative problem-solving approach to address the programming and support service needs of individual students;
- parents/guardians are regularly involved in decisions about their children's educational program;
- instructional leadership and support are provided by administrators and school-based student support staff to assist classroom teachers in developing appropriate programming for all students;
- ongoing training and staff development are seen as a priority and are facilitated;
- school boards provide a continuum of programming options and services to meet the special needs of students;
- there are strong linkages between the school and outside agencies and a co-operative approach to support service delivery.

Note: The above section was adapted from *Educating All Our Children*, Northwest Territories Department of Education, 1993.

Policy 2.1

Each school board is required to provide appropriate programming for all students with special needs and must use allocated resources for this purpose.

2.1 Guidelines

The Department of Education and Culture provides a nonglobal grant to assist school boards with the costs of providing programming and services for students with special needs. The provisions of this grant may be subject to change from year to year. (See policy 1.3)

2.1 Procedures

The Department of Education and Culture supports the use of a wide variety of delivery structures which necessitates flexible scheduling and the cooperation and involvement of all team members in implementing services for students with special needs. District/regional staff responsible for special services, in conjunction with school administrators, develop the roles of student services personnel to meet the needs of the students for whom they are responsible. These responsibility areas are developed in the context of district/region and provincial policies and guidelines. As the needs of the students change, the roles of personnel may also change. Appendices viii and ix contain suggested areas of competency and samples of guidelines concerning the role of resource teachers.

2.1 **Education Act:** Sections 64 (d), 68, 72
Other References: Policy 1.3

Policy 2.2

Each school board is responsible for establishing a process of identification, assessment, program planning and evaluation for students with special needs.

2.2 Guidelines

The school board is responsible for the implementation of this process; therefore, each procedural step should be documented in the school board's special education policy manual. School boards are encouraged to refer to the appropriate sections of the Department of Education and Culture's *Special Education Policy Manual*.

2.2 Sample Procedure

On the following pages is a sample outline, in graphic and written form, of how a program planning process might be implemented. It is not intended as a prescribed approach, but rather as an illustration.

Identification, Assessment and Program Planning Process

Stage 1 – Screening and Identification

This stage may be initiated by a variety of people. Some children and students may come to school with a myriad of assessments and programming information from other agencies or from another school. Some students may have been in school for a number of years and their special needs may be identified at a later stage by the classroom teacher who regularly observes students in the learning situation. The planning process can be initiated at any time based on student need.

If a student has been identified as needing an individual program plan before entry to school, the team may wish to start the process at step 3, "Referral to Program Planning Team," to avoid delay.

Parents are expected to be involved at the beginning of the process. Classroom teachers, parents, students and outside agency personnel and resource teachers are all possible initiators at this stage. The principal should be aware of any communication concerning students at this stage.

Stage 2 – Exploration of Instructional Strategies

After a student has been identified as requiring additional planning to meet his/her needs, the classroom teacher uses available material and human resources to explore a variety of strategies in the learning process. In all schools there is a wealth of experience to draw upon. In exploring alternative methods of working with students, teachers may also wish to consult supervisors, school psychologists or other available personnel. The key at this stage is to be as creative as possible in determining a wide variety of behavioural and/or curriculum strategies to meet student needs while ensuring accurate record keeping in terms of the outcome of utilizing these approaches. Determining why a method doesn't produce the desired outcome can yield as much information as one that does. Co-operation and collaboration among professionals and parents are essential at this stage.

The identification, assessment and program planning process may not go beyond this stage for many students as their needs may be met through ongoing evaluation and monitoring in the classroom. (Policy 2.4)

Stage 3 – Referral to Program Planning Team

If the classroom teacher requires further support to meet the needs of a student, he/she may wish to refer to the program planning team.

The format of the referral depends on school and district/regional procedures. In some cases the initiator of the referral may be required to have certain types of information available for the principal in order to make an informed decision whether or not to select team members and set a date for the program planning team meeting. Information required may include anecdotal information, observation records, informal assessment, interviews with the student and involved agencies, school records or any other information available that may be of help in program planning. Care should be taken not to use outdated or irrelevant assessment data.

Stage 4 – Program Planning Team Meeting

The program planning team must ensure that the problem or difficulty facing the student and/or teachers and parents is clarified before proceeding with planning. The reason for referral does not always match the team's clarification of the problem and careful problem solving at this stage can prevent unnecessary or inappropriate steps being taken.

Team members should be those who have responsibility for the student's learning. The team should always include the principal or vice-principal, teachers involved and parents/guardians. (See policy 2.4) These members form the core of the team. The selection of additional members depends on the needs of the student and on the personnel resources of the school district and community. In cases where there are many teachers involved, as in high school, reports can be gathered from teachers for presentation at the team meeting; however, key personnel should be present. In some cases this may include the student, especially at a high school level when career/transitional decisions are being discussed. Every attempt should be made to encourage parents to feel comfortable in presenting their views of the student's strengths and needs.

The team meeting provides an opportunity for members to come together to clarify, given all available information, the student's strengths and needs and to decide on future actions to be taken in terms of program planning. **The meeting should not be a forum for teachers, administrators, and other agency personnel to present a completed program to the parents.** If this is done, the parents become outsiders to the process and do not have the opportunity to affect decision making in any meaningful way. Together, the members should discuss the information each has observed and collected. Concerns should be expressed openly and information presented, without judgmental rebuttal. However, in cases where differences of opinion occur, the chairperson would act as mediator in the process.

The team decides whether or not to proceed with development of an individualized program plan (IPP). The meeting may highlight the need for a change in instructional strategies or evaluation methods while maintaining the objectives of a prescribed course. When this occurs, a statement outlining adaptation of strategies, evaluation methods and support services required should be recorded in the student's cumulative file. However, when the objectives of provincially approved curriculum must be changed to meet the needs of the student, an IPP becomes necessary. An IPP may focus on behavioral as well as curriculum outcomes to address student behaviours which may inhibit learning. At this point, the chairperson designates responsibility areas to the team members to develop the individualized program plan according to the priorities, goals and approaches set at the meeting, or to collect further information if necessary.

Stage 5 – Program Plan Developed

The program planning team uses information gathered to write the program plan. Those that have responsibility for implementation of parts of the plan should be involved in developing the objectives, deciding on strategies and evaluation procedures. The individual program plan should include the following components (Policy 2.6):

- a summary of student strengths and needs
  - annual individualized outcomes (goals)
  - specific individualized outcomes (objectives)
  - recommended services
  - responsibility areas
  - review dates
  - signatures

Stage 6 – Implementation of Program Plan

Team members are assigned responsibility areas and monitor student progress. The teacher responsible for teaching the student is also responsible for evaluating the student's progress in that curriculum area (Policies 2.5 and 2.6).

Stage 7 – Monitoring

Teachers and designated team members are required to evaluate individual program plans in order to assess student progress continually.

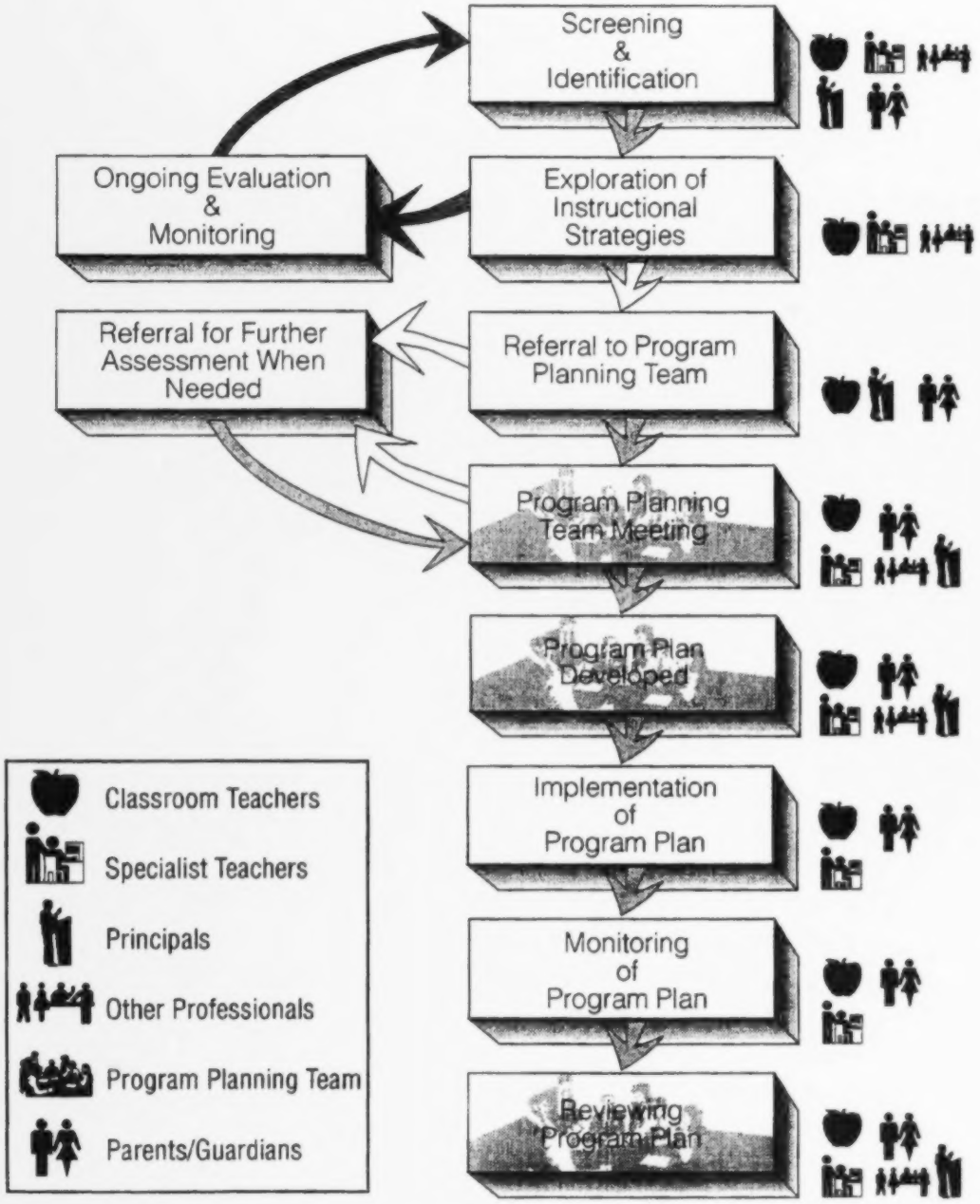
Stage 8 – Review of Program Plan

The program planning team is responsible for reviewing the student's progress in the plan and meeting to discuss changes when necessary. The program plan should be reviewed at least twice annually.

2.2 **Education Act:** Sections 25, 26, 38
Other References: Policy 2.4, 2.7
Public School Programs 1.9.3, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.

Identification, Assessment & Program

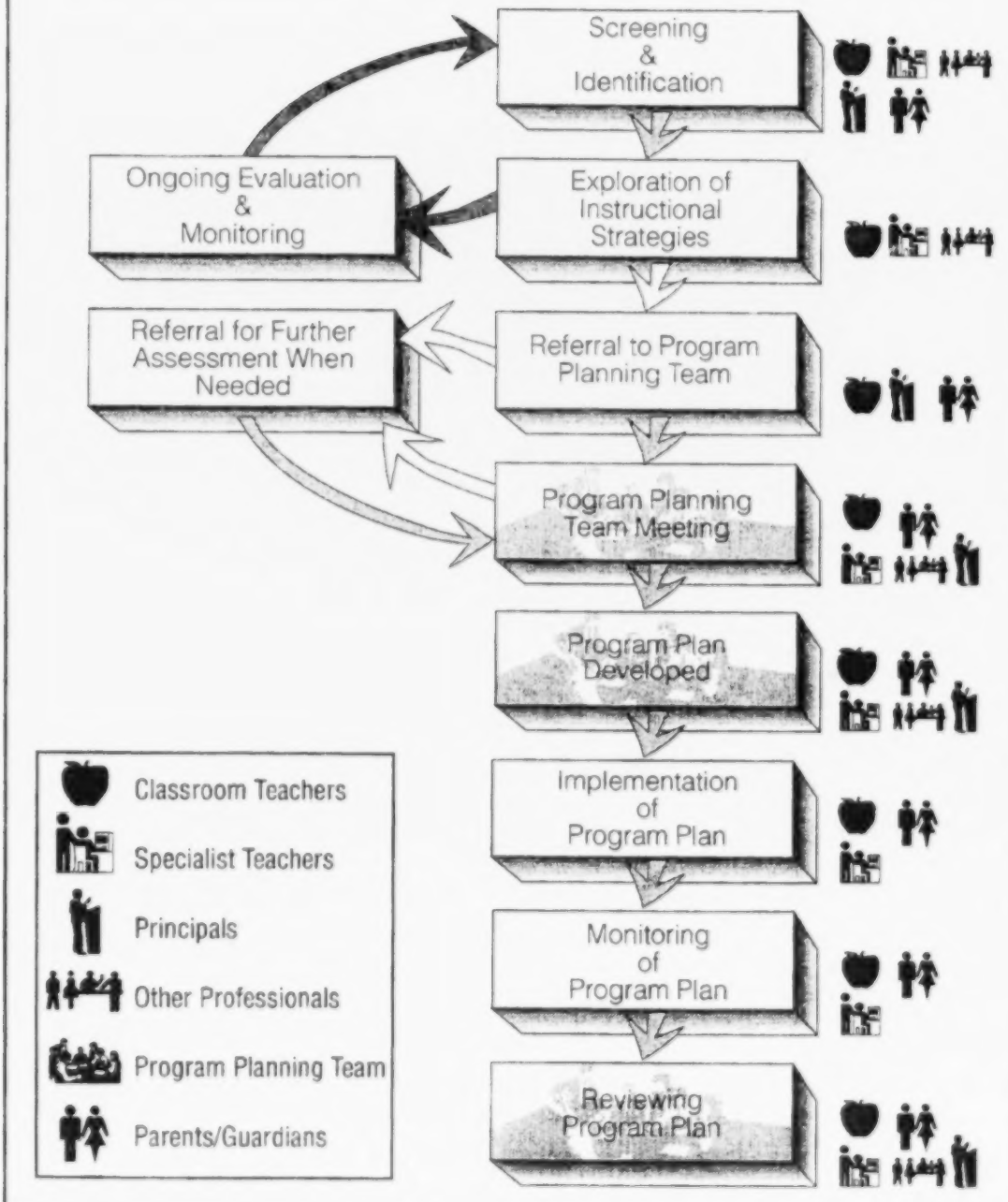
Planning Process



SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL
NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND CULTURE, 1996

Identification, Assessment & Program

Planning Process



Policy 2.3

Each school board shall establish, at the school level, program planning teams responsible for programming and monitoring.

2.3 Guidelines

The responsibility for ensuring that appropriate programs are provided for all students, including those with special needs, lies with the principal. The planning and implementation of programs should be accomplished through a team process. The core team should comprise the school principal or vice-principal, teachers involved (e.g. classroom teachers, resource teachers), parents/guardians, and students as appropriate. Selection of additional members will depend on the special needs of the students and on the personnel resources of the school board and the community.

For example, additional members may include:

- special services supervisor
- school counsellor
- school psychologist
- speech-language pathologist
- itinerant teacher
- representatives of other agencies

2.3 **Education Act:** Sections 24, 25, 26, 38, 64 (d)
Other References: *Public School Programs* 1.9.3, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.

Policy 2.4

Each school is responsible for involving and informing parents/guardians with respect to decisions regarding assessments designed for their child.

2.4 Procedures

School boards are responsible for developing guidelines on the nature of consultation with the parent or guardian prior to, and subsequent to, the completion of an assessment.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians are involved in the identification, referral, and assessment processes. Whatever procedure individual school boards develop, the following key points should be considered:

- At the time of registration or early in that school year, all parents/guardians should be made aware of the school board's policies and procedures for identification, assessment, and referral.
- Before a referral for assessment is initiated to either school board employees or professionals from other agencies, the parents/guardians, as program planning team members, must be consulted.
- Written parental consent is required for any formal individual assessment carried out by employees of the board or persons/agencies to whom the student has been referred. (Appendix i: Definition of "formal individual assessment")
- A written confirmation of the nature of any formal assessment and/or consultation should be sent to the parents/guardians and a copy kept in the student's programming file. The written confirmation should indicate a date and time for a follow-up meeting to be held with the parents/guardians to discuss the results of any referral/assessment.
- Parents/guardians have a right to obtain a copy of the assessment report upon request.

2.4 **Education Act:** Sections 26 (r), 38 (d)
Other References: *Public School Programs* 1.9.3, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.
The Nova Scotia Student Cumulative Record Folder Completion Instructions, Department of Education and Culture, 1988.

Policy 2.5

Each school board is responsible for ensuring that appropriate assessments are carried out by qualified personnel.

2.5 Guidelines

Good professional practice suggests that the educational progress of all pupils be monitored regularly in order to identify students who are at risk as soon as possible. Classroom teachers are in a position to offer an abundance of information regarding students in their care. Informal assessments (e.g. observation, running records, checklists, portfolios, etc.) should form the basis of a comprehensive profile of strengths and needs. When formal assessment is deemed necessary, parental consent is required and the purpose, format and results of the assessment should be discussed with parents/guardians. (Policy 2.4)

Formal and informal assessment should be selected and conducted in such a way that interpretation will be free of bias due to gender, language, culture or race. Bias-free assessment is particularly important when schools are using assessments in decision making regarding changes in program or implementation of supports.

2.5 **Education Act:** Sections 64 (2)(u), 141 (e)

Policy 2.6

An individual program plan (IPP), based on the student's strengths and needs, will be developed and implemented for every student for whom the provincial curriculum outcomes are not applicable and/or attainable.

2.6 Guidelines

Each school district will establish procedures and guidelines for the development and implementation of individual program plans.

Teaching practice necessarily includes the use of a variety of teaching strategies to enable students to meet or to extend their learning beyond the designated outcomes. The manipulation of additional variables such as time, classroom organization and evaluation techniques will also be necessary to meet individual student needs. Provided the designated outcomes are not substantially altered, these procedures do not require an individual program plan, although specific changes should be documented in the student's cumulative file, e.g. oral evaluation in place of written evaluation, curriculum compacting (Policy 2.2, Stage 4).

When the manipulation of instructional variables is not sufficient to address student needs in the context of the prescribed curriculum, the program planning team is responsible for the development of an individual program plan. Program plans should be developed in the context of the broad curriculum outcomes for each core program. For students whose special needs include non-academic areas, the individual program plan should detail the outcomes involved and the supports and services needed to enable the student to reach these outcomes. (Appendix i: Definitions)

2.6 Procedures

The components of the individual program plan for each student should include the following:

1. A summary of student strengths and needs

The summary should include information on the student's physical, behavioral, social, and academic strengths and needs. A brief summary of the types of assessments used in determining strengths and needs should be included in the individual program plan, while more complete results/reports should be kept in the student's confidential file.

2. Annual individualized outcomes (goals)

Annual individualized outcomes are statements of expected achievement over a one-year period. These statements are estimates of future performance based on past achievement, present performance, and priority areas of desired development. Priority areas should be established in consultation with parents through the program planning team process to ensure a co-ordinated effort between the home and school.

3. Specific individualized outcomes (objectives)

Specific individualized outcomes are statements outlining specific steps which lead to the attainment of the broader outcomes. Specific outcomes are arranged according to the developmental process involved and the expected progression toward identified broad outcomes. The specific outcomes are the basis for the evaluation of the student's growth toward attainment of the annual individualized outcomes. Specific outcomes should be grouped under curriculum outcomes in each program where applicable.

4. Recommended services

These services may be divided into three categories:

a) educational strategies (e.g. specific instructional strategies, organizational techniques, evaluation procedures)
b) special materials/equipment (e.g. computers, alternative formal materials, optical aids, specially designed furniture);
c) human resources (e.g. resource teachers, speech-language pathologists, physiotherapists, teacher/student assistants, mentors, etc.).

5. Responsibility areas

Specific responsibilities for teaching, modifying/extending and evaluating objectives must be assigned to individuals with the appropriate professional competence. However, the overall responsibility for the evaluation of the plan rests with the team as a whole. The team is responsible for ensuring that the plan outlines a comprehensive and cohesive approach to meeting student needs.

6. Review dates

The program planning team is responsible for setting dates for the review of the overall plan. However, individual team members are responsible for the ongoing evaluation of their designated responsibility areas. The overall plan should be reviewed at least twice in each year. Dates for the review of the program plan should be set at each program planning team meeting.

7. Signatures

The IPP is signed at a meeting with the parents at which the team members from the school or representatives of that group review and discuss the program. The signatures indicate agreement on the IPP. In cases where parents/guardians do not agree with the program plan, an appeal procedure may be initiated. However, all efforts should be made to resolve disputes through discussions, and mediation before a formal review (appeal) is required. (Policy 1.8). If the school is experiencing difficulty in having the parents attend a meeting, the Supervisor of Special Services should be notified. Parents should be provided a copy of the IPP.

2.6 **Education Act:** Sections 25, 26, 38, 64 (2)
Other References: *Public School Programs* 1.9.3, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.
The Nova Scotia Student Cumulative Record Folder Completion Instructions, Department of Education and Culture, 1988.

Policy 2.7

Transition planning is part of the individual planning process for each student with special needs.

2.7 Guidelines

Transition implies passage from one stage to another. While this applies at all stages of a student's career from preschool to grade 12, special emphasis should be placed on particular phases of this process; for example, the transitions from preschool to school entry, from elementary to junior high, junior high to high school and high-school-to community. School to community transition is the crossover from youth to adulthood and carries with it expectations of independent living, employment and recreational pursuits. Transition planning must take into consideration all major aspects of each student's life experiences.

2.7 Procedures

1. Transition planning is an integral part of the ongoing team planning process throughout the school years. Careful attention should be given to the composition of the program planning team to ensure that all those involved or potentially involved with the student's program are part of the decision-making process.

2. The process of school-to-community transition is an integral part of the individual program planning process.

3. School-to-community transition planning should begin when a student enters junior high school.

4. School-to-community transition planning should address any area necessary for students to participate successfully in education, employment, housing, friendships, recreation, medical services, transportation, community activities, financial management, etc.

2.7 **Education Act:** 25 (2), 26 (g), 64 (d)
Other References: Manual and Video, Transition Planning in Nova Scotia, Department of Education and Culture, 1994.
P & R Release, Statement on Integration, Department of Education and Culture, 1991. (Appendix iv)

Policy 2.8

School boards should establish procedures for regular evaluation of programs and services for students with special needs.

2.8 Guidelines

Program evaluation should encompass all aspects of program development and implementation; e.g. involvement of parents, interagency co-operation, stated outcomes, instructional approaches.

2.8 Procedures

Teachers are required to evaluate students in order to continually assess their progress toward the achievement of stated outcomes. Accountability is tied to the goals and objectives of the program plan.

> *. . . what must be accounted for is student progress toward the outcomes identified in the IPP, not the process or time spent in delivery of service . . . As students progress, the school's monitoring and accountability systems may require changes in the rate and nature of instruction and support if outcomes are not being achieved.*[5]

[5]Adapted from: Sage, D.D. and Burello, L.C. (1994). *Leadership in Educational Reform. An Administrator's Guide to Changes in Special Education.* Maryland: Paul Brookes.

2.8 **Education Act:** Sections 26, 38 (2)(f), 39 (2)(a)
Other References: *Public School Programs* 1.2, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95
Department of Education and Culture Curriculum Guides.

Policy 2.9

Each school board is required to provide access to school records.

2.9 Guidelines

The implementation of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and recent emphasis on human rights raise the issue of an individual's right of access to personal and confidential information. The school system collects and maintains personal information on students in the form of cumulative record files and additional confidential files. School districts are responsible for establishing policy guidelines regarding access to school records, and confidentiality of information.

2.9 Procedures

1. The access rights of the following persons should be considered in developing procedures for access:

   (i) a pupil with his or her parent/guardian
   (ii) a pupil who is 16 years or more of age, who is living independently of a parent or guardian
   (iii) duly authorized officers of the department
   (iv) school officials designated by the school board
   (v) a youth worker or court agent, as defined in the *Young Offenders Act*
   (vi) a parent or guardian of a dependent pupil.

2. The *Nova Scotia Student Cumulative Record Folder Completion Instructions*, 1988, outlines access to cumulative records as follows:

The following persons, shall, upon request, have access to the student's record:

1) parents, guardians, and persons designated by the Crown as having responsibility for the student;

2) students, age nineteen and over. These students have the right to restrict access to their own records except as specified in law;

3) agencies and organizations with the written permission of the parent or guardian of the student or with the written permission of the student if he/she is nineteen years of age or older;

4) professional school staff who require the record to plan the student's program.

Conditions for access should be developed which address the need for interpretation of current assessment information by qualified personnel.

2.9 **Education Act:** Sections 26 (1)(s), 145 (1)(q)
Other References: *Young Offenders Act*, Section 2.11
The Nova Scotia Cumulative Record Folder Completion Instructions, Department of Education and Culture, 1988.

3.0

Partnerships

Background

It is recognized that in order to provide students with a "broad-based, high-quality education, it is necessary to expand the traditional context of educational decision making to include multiple agencies/departments, the community, parents and other potential partners."[7]

> *. . . In working with exceptional children, many outside agencies are involved. Orchestrating the multiple agendas of the constituents requires precise timing and an appreciation of the contribution that each will make to the whole. First, however, there must be a conscious decision to involve a wider constituency in the delivery of educational services to exceptional children.*[8]

[7] *Public School Programs*, 1993-95, Department of Education and Culture, 1993, p.2

[8] Lipp, Margaret; *An Emerging Perspective on Special Education: A Developmental Agenda for the 90's*, CEC International Conference, Atlanta, Georgia; April 1991, p.27.

Policy 3.1

Parents/guardians have a right to be involved and informed about their children's educational programs.

3.1 Guidelines

1. Parents/guardians possess a wealth of knowledge and experience about the special needs of their children. As the primary advocates for their children, they have an obligation to take an active role in sharing this knowledge with the school. Their involvement in the program planning process can be invaluable in meeting individual needs.

2. Decisions about program planning and services should be reached by mutual agreement among team members including parents /guardians.

3.1 Procedures

1. Parental consent is required for formal individual assessment of students and every effort should be made to obtain it for agreement to the individual program plan. (Policies 2.4, 2.5 and Appendix vi)

3.1 **Education Act:** Sections 25, 145 (i)(k)
Other References: *Public School Programs* 1.9.3, Department of Education and Culture, 1993-95.
The Nova Scotia Student Cumulative Record Folder Complete Instructions, Department of Education and Culture, 1988.

Policy 3.2

School boards are responsible for ensuring that the individual program planning process is collaborative in meeting students' needs.

3.2 Guidelines

1. The intensity of the services in terms of the number of personnel involved will vary according to the needs of the student within the school setting.

2. In common with other students, students who require special education services need the knowledge and skills to lead independent and purposeful lives. Students will attain these aims to varying degrees depending on the interaction among several factors, including the nature and degree of the student's special needs, the motivation of the student, and the cooperation and communication among schools, parents and community support systems.

3. Collaborative planning among teachers across settings is essential for consistent and comprehensive programming and the principal has an essential role in facilitating this interaction.

4. School boards are responsible for ensuring that the individual program planning process provides for the active involvement and participation of parents/ guardians.

   Parents/Guardians should be involved throughout all aspects of services for students with special needs, including identification, assessment, program planning and evaluation. Parents/Guardians can describe, interpret, and validate reliably; participate successfully; and make accurate developmental judgments about their children. Of course, not all families will choose to participate actively or to evaluate their own children. However, as professionals increasingly recognize and seek care giver's expertise, care givers may be more willing to take on active roles. The primary issue is not which roles family members take, but what roles are made available to families

and how the choice of roles is facilitated by professionals . . . True collaboration with families is not achieved quickly or easily. It requires astute observational skills, the ability to use self-reflection and self-analysis, the development of active listening skills, the ability to refrain from professionally directed solution generation, and, perhaps most of all, patience and flexibility. However, the benefits reaped from this type of collaboration are many and include improved family-professional relationships, increased understanding of the child and the family, increased participation of families in assessment and intervention planning, and higher levels of parent satisfaction.[9]

[9] Crais, Elizabeth (1993), *Topics in Language Disorders*, 14(1), 29-40.

Policy 3.3

School boards are responsible for collaborating in the development and provision of programs and services for students with special needs.

3.3 Guidelines

1. The *Education Act* provides for the establishment of agreements between and among boards for the education of students residing within its jurisdiction.

2. Collaboration in joint planning, funding and delivery assists in the provision of services which might not otherwise be available. The administrative structures of shared services ensure local control, provide the basis for a coordinated approach to specialized services and provide a model for expansion to other program areas.

3. Government departments and agencies have differing boundaries for the provision of services to students with special needs. Coordination is essential to ensure that appropriate personnel are involved with decision making while minimizing duplication of planning and implementation of services.

   . . . School Boards will now focus on regional planning, student outcomes and management of regional resources and procedures. As with school boards, roles and responsibilities for superintendents will more clearly focus on regional management and operational issues. The superintendent will be accountable to the school board for regional student outcomes, supervise equitable distribution of resources, ensure schools operate within provincial and board policies, and manage those centralized support services which benefit from economies of scale. The superintendent will also provide educational leadership in the region focussed on quality education, enhanced community involvement and increased responsibility for decision-making at the local level.[10]

[10] *Education Horizons*, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, 1995.

3.3 **Education Act:** Section 64 (2)(u)(v), 64 (3)(c), 66
Other References: *A Vision of the Future: The Report of the Working Group on Mental Health, Department of Health*, December, 1992.
Nova Scotia's Blueprint for Health System Reform, Department of Health, 1994.
Education Horizons: New Roles and Responsibilities to Support Student Success, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture, June, 1995.

Policy 3.4

The Department of Education and Culture is responsible for actively participating in interdepartmental and interagency collaborative efforts in the design and implementation of appropriate programs and services for students with special needs.

3.4 Guidelines

1. Protocol agreements are developed between the Department of Education and Culture and other government departments to help ensure consistent and comprehensive services for students with special needs.

2. The Department of Education and Culture participates on a variety of interdepartmental and interagency committees. These committees collaborate in problem solving complex issues involving a wide variety of service delivery agencies for students with special needs.

3. The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) is an interprovincial co-operative agency established in 1975 by joint agreement among the four Atlantic provinces. APSEA is authorized to provide educational services, programs, and opportunities for persons between the ages of 0 and 21 years with impairments of vision and hearing, who are residents of Atlantic Canada.

3.4 Procedures

1. In order to access APSEA services, parents/teachers/administrators should contact the special services supervisor in their board to arrange for an educational assessment of the student. The supervisor will notify APSEA. For practical reasons, notification should go directly to APSEA.

3.4 **Education Act:** Section 141 (l), 146 (1)(aa)
Other References: P & I Release, "Joint Process for School Placement of Children's Training Centre Residents", Department of Education and Culture, 1994. (Appendix iv)
Handicapped Persons Education Act, 1975.
Transition Planning in Nova Scotia, Department of Education and Culture, 1994.

i-xii

Appendices

Appendix i

Definitions

Legislation: A law passed by a legislative body such as the Provincial Legislature.

Regulation: A rule or order having the force of law designed to govern behavior.

Policy: A course of action selected from alternatives in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions.

Guideline: An outline of policy or conduct.

Procedure: A way of accomplishing certain activities or of acting.

Formal Individual Assessment: Formal assessment refers to an individual assessment performed by a qualified professional using formal assessment instruments such as standardized tests, as well as other sources of information. It is intended to produce diagnostic information about the student's ability. Formal assessment instruments have standardized procedures for administration, scoring and interpretation. They may be "norm-referenced" meaning that they are normed on a representative sample of students and provide age or grade-level scores, standard scores, or percentiles that allow the educator to compare a student with other students of the same age and grade.

Curriculum Outcomes: Statements which articulate what students are expected to know and be able to do in particular subject areas. Outcomes statements also describe what knowledge, skills, and attitudes students are expected to demonstrate at the end of certain key stages in their education as a result of their **cumulative** learning experiences at each grade level in their entry to the graduation continuum.

Essential Graduation Learnings:

Statements describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. Achievement of the essential graduation learnings will prepare students to continue to learn throughout their lives. These learnings describe expectations not in terms of individual school subjects but in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. Essential graduation learnings are cross-curricular, and curriculum in all subject areas is focused to enable students to achieve the learning. Essential graduation learnings serve as a framework for the curriculum development process.

Appendix ii

Special Education Programs and Services Committee

Terms of Reference and Membership

Suggested terms of reference are as follows:

1. A Special Education Programs and Services Committee will be formed to consist of not more than 18 members selected in consultation with the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture and the Director of Student Services.

2. In addition to its general membership, the Committee will consist of members selected to represent the Departments of Health, Community Services and Justice.

3. The Committee will meet at least twice per year and from time to time as determined by the Committee and will perform the following functions:

   a) Act in an information sharing and supportive role to the Director of Student Services and among the agencies and groups involved in the education of students with special needs.

   b) Review and monitor programs and services to students with exceptionalities as well as government initiatives and make recommendations designed to improve policies, legislation and approaches.

   c) Conduct the business of the Committee in an effective manner.

Appendix iii

Emergency Funding

Criteria

The criteria used by the Department of Education and Culture in evaluating requests for emergency capital funding are, in order of relative importance:

1. Projects

   (a) required to temporarily relieve overcrowding such as portable classrooms where no alternative facilities are available;
   (b) required to ensure that students are educated in safe facilities including correcting defective or deteriorated building components such as wooden windows required to provide adequate ventilation to building occupants;
   (c) required to provide safe working conditions for school board employees such as improvements to school bus garages; and
   (d) required to bring buildings to an acceptable standard including major renovations, repairs and associated painting.

2. Projects required to make schools accessible for the physically challenged when a physically-challenged student is either attending or will be attending a school. Factors such as the location of specialist areas; grade level of the student; the possibility of the building being replaced in the near future; and the amount of school space in a multi-storey section of a school versus the amount located in a one-storey section.

3. Roof replacements where the school board has maintained the roof over its lifetime, the roof is past its functional life, and repair and maintenance are not practical. These replacements are required to protect the internal components of the building.

4. Heating system replacements where the system has been properly maintained and qualified consultants recommend replacement. At times, replacement is recommended because the existing boiler is no longer safe to operate.

5. Projects required to make facilities meet the requirements of other government

departments and agencies. Examples are dust collection systems when ordered by the Department of Labour, or fire alarm upgrades ordered by the Office of the Fire Marshall. The Department of Education and Culture requires evidence of the order from these departments and agencies.

6. Projects committed by the Minister of Education and Culture or the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture where the need is consistent with one of the above criteria.

There are other factors considered when making recommendations concerning the approval of emergency capital projects. An attempt is made to share available funds among all boards having such projects. Therefore, if a board requests approval of several emergency capital projects, the cost of which would consume a substantial proportion of the total available funds, thus leaving relatively little for the remaining boards, only a portion of these requests are recommended for approval. If a school board is involved in a consolidation of schools and/or a rationalization of space and requires portable classrooms to complete its plans, this will be given consideration but not at the expense of higher priority projects involving accessibility, roof replacements and safety considerations. Also, the overall financial position of the school board and the possible use of accumulated surplus and reserves are considered.

Appendix iv

P & I Releases

- Joint Process for School Placement of Children's Training Centre Residents
- Statement on Integration
- Medication / Medical Treatment in Public Schools

Nova Scotia

P AND I RELEASE

Department of Education

Policy and Information Releases are notices for school board chairpersons and secretaries, superintendents and principals, distributed by the Publication and Communication Division, Policy Branch, Nova Scotia Department of Education, P O Box 578, Halifax, NS B3J 2S9.

No. A-1: 1993-94

February 16, 1994

Joint Process For School Placement Of Children's Training Centre Residents

1. When planning begins with respect to transferring a Children's Training Centre resident to a home or community placement, the Department of Community Services will advise the Department of Education of the possible placement.

2. The Department of Education will advise the school district that there is a possibility of a placement.

3. As soon as the placement has been confirmed, the Department of Education will contact the receiving school board to initiate planning.

Appropriate planning should include the following:

(a) An individual program plan (IPP) team meeting is to be set up by the school district. All involved members should be present, i.e.:

- regional inspector, Department of Education
- former residential staff of the Children's Training Centre (CTC)
- present (future) residential staff (small option home) parents/guardians
- previous school personnel (teachers/student assistant) if applicable receiving school personnel (teachers/administrator/student assistant)
- receiving school district personnel
- other involved local department representatives (Health, Community Services)

A chairperson should be designated for team meetings, as well as a recorder and a person responsible for developing the IPP and communicating with team members.

(b) The IPP team should discuss the student's strengths and needs and develop program goals. Care should be taken to ensure that behavioral goals are consistent across settings and that these are agreed upon and implemented by those involved in the various settings.

(c) Formal, as well as informal lines of communication should be established to ensure that the appropriate information is shared by all team members on a continuing basis, and that school board policies and procedures are followed.

(d) Release of information forms should be signed by the parents/guardians so that information needed for appropriate programming is available to the school.

(e) Team meetings should be scheduled as early as possible to have supports available as well as appropriate training/in-service for staff when required.

4. The IPP team members should agree on an appropriate transition/phase-in period for school entrance. While some students will be immediately able to attend school full-time, others may require a period of adjustment to the new school and home environments. The team may decide that attendance part-time for a short period is in the best interests of a student.

5. When the student requires medical procedures (e.g., tube feeding, catheterization, suctioning) the Department of Health and parents/guardians must be key players in training school personnel to carry out procedures which are transferable to non-medical personnel. If the student requires a procedure that can only be administered by medical personnel (as deemed by the Department of Health), then appropriate supports must be arranged before the student's school entrance. This will be followed up with the Departments of Health and Education. (See also P&R Release A-1, Dec. 17, 1985 on Medication/Medical Treatment in Public Schools.)

6. A copy of the IPP team meeting minutes, including specific supports required, decisions made, and goals, should be forwarded to all members of the team. A follow up meeting date should be set at the team meeting and confirmed in the minutes.

7. Consistent communication is essential among all members to ensure that an appropriate program is developed and implemented in the best interests of the student.

Funding Structure

When a new student enters a school system as a result of a CTC closure, funding will consist of a grant per student. If students are enrolled before September 30, they will also be included in the board's student count for formula funding.

The transition grant will be allocated over a three-year span pro-rated by fiscal year based on the date of entry to the school system in a given district.

lst year	=	$20,000
2nd year	=	$13,500
3rd year	=	$6,700

After the third year, additional funding through this transition grant will cease.
Funding will be provided to school districts through the Department of Education.

John MacEachern
Minister of Education

Recipients of this release are asked to convey its contents to all of their staff members for whom the information is relevant.

Nova Scotia

P & R

Department of Education

Publication and Reference, Box 568, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2S9

No A-2: 1991-92

November 26, 1991

Distribution: Officers of the Department of Education, superintendents of schools, principals of all schools, chairs and secretaries of school boards, NSTU, UNSM, NSSBA, and heads of university faculties of education. Administrators who receive this release are asked to convey the information it contains to their staff members.

Statement on Integration

The basic goals of general education are appropriate for all students. As stated in the *Public School Programs* document, most students who require special education services can have their needs met in the regular classroom. In recent years the integration of students with exceptional needs into regular classrooms has increased in the public schools of Nova Scotia. This integration can provide the greatest degree of educational opportunity for most students with exceptional needs.

The issue no longer is whether most students with exceptional needs should or should not be integrated, but what support is needed for integration to be successful. Implementing integration requires a profound change in thinking and operating for the education system. The philosophy of integration involves moral, ethical, social and pedagogical values and practices. The implementation process must be approached with sensitivity so that all involved adults, including parents, teachers, and the wider community, work together to prepare students for successful school experiences. It must be acknowledged that implementation of integration is a long-term process, and one that will require planning and the most effective use of available fiscal and human resources.

Both the Department of Education and district school boards have roles to play in integration.

Role of the Department of Education

The role of the Department of Education with respect to integration includes the following:

1. To provide policies and guidelines regarding the education of students with exceptional needs.

2. To consult with district school boards regarding the development and implementation of services for students with exceptional needs.

3. To collaborate with district school boards and other agencies in providing ongoing professional development for teachers and support staff.

4. To consult with school and district staff regarding the adaptation of curriculum and related learning resources.

5. To ensure that new departmental publications related to curriculum matters contain information to assist teachers in enhancing learning for students with exceptional needs.

6. To ensure that provincial in-services related to current and newly developed courses and programs address issues related to students with exceptional needs.

7. To consult with district school boards regarding the adaptation of evaluation policies and methodologies related to students with exceptional needs.

8. To encourage faculties of education in Nova Scotia universities and colleges to ensure that their pre-service teacher education programs give emphasis to preparation for meeting the challenges of teaching students with a wide range of abilities within regular classes.

Role of the District School Boards

The role of district school boards with respect to integration includes the following:

1. To develop written policies and procedures consistent with provincial policies and guidelines regarding students with exceptional needs.

2. To establish a structure to promote collaboration in support of classroom/subject teachers as they address the program and other requirements of students with exceptional needs.

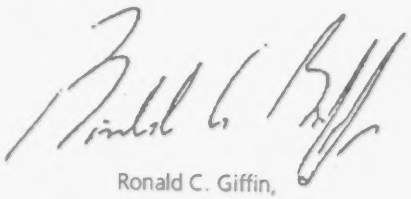
3. To establish a process to ensure appropriate adaptations are made in programs for individual students with exceptional needs.

4. To sensitize students and staff about students with exceptional needs.

5. To develop transition plans within and beyond the public school, including collaboration with other community agencies, for students with exceptional needs.

6. To ensure that district in-services on current and newly developed courses and programs address issues related to students with exceptional needs.

As schools become more inclusive, we must ensure that we provide high quality education for all students. Integration is a dynamic process. Together, we must continue to refine our understanding of how children learn and how to provide the best possible service to all children in our public schools.



Ronald C. Giffin,
Minister of Education

Nova Scotia

P & R

Department of Education

Publication and Reference, Box 568, Halfiax, N.S. B3J 2S9

No. A-1: 1985-86

December 17, 1985

Distribution: Officers of the Department of Education, chief education officers, principals of all schools, chairmen and secretaries of school boards, NSTU, UNSM, NSSBA, and heads of university faculties of education. Administrators who receive this release are asked to convey the information it contains to their staff members.

The following statement regarding procedures for the provision of medication and health care during the school day has been developed through consultations by the Department of Education with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, the Nova Scotia School Boards Association and the Department of Health. The participants in these consultations have agreed that the statement will be reviewed in one year's time.

Medication/Medical Treatment In Public Schools

Education/School Board

1. School boards are responsible for the administration of oral medication during school hours, when such medication has been prescribed by a physician and authorized by the parent to be administered during school hours. The health care and comfort of physically disabled students will also be the responsibility of school boards (positioning, assistance with mobility, feeding and toileting and general maintenance). The Department of Health will work co-operatively with aides and/or other board personnel in providing advice and assistance.

2. A request for the administration of oral medication and the authorization to provide such service must be made in writing to the school board by the parent together with a copy of the physician's prescription, specifying the medication, the dosage, the frequency and method of administration, the dates for which the authorization applies, and the possible side effects, if any.

3. Storage and safekeeping requirements for any labelled medication must be clearly stated by the physician and shall be provided by the school board.

4. A record of administration of oral medication shall be maintained which includes the pupil's name, date, time of provision, dosage given and the name of the person administering the medication.

5. The telephone numbers of the parent and physician should be readily accessible in the school.

6. The medication must be administered in a manner which allows for sensitivity and privacy and which encourages the pupil to take an appropriate level of responsibility for his or her medication.

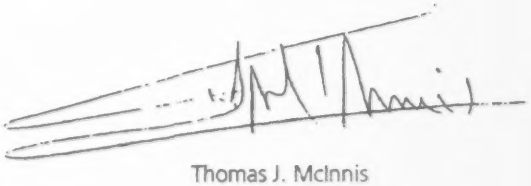
7. The injection of medication and procedures other than oral medication are administered only by a person, other than a teacher, who is either a health professional or who has been trained to perform the injection or other procedure.

8. Physio/occupational therapy services should be provided by qualified professionals.

Department of Health

1. The Department of Health will co-operate with the Department of Education and the Nova Scotia School Boards Association in providing advice and assistance in such procedures as injection of medication, catheterization, manual expression of bladder/stoma, postural drainage and tube feeding.

2. Should a need develop for a service which has not already been designated, the matter should be referred by the school board to the Department of Education through the Inspector of Schools for its consideration in consultation with the Department of Health.



Thomas J. McInnis
Minister of Education

Appendix v

Learning Resources and Technology Division,
Department of Education and Culture
3770 Kempt Road
Halifax, N. S. B3K 4X8
902-424-2462 or fax 902-424-0633

1. Education Media Library

Learning Resources and Technology Division distributes non-print learning resources in a variety of media to schools and teachers via its Media Library. Media Library catalogues are available in every school, and the Learning Resources and Technology Division publishes updates periodically in *Education Nova Scotia* and *The Teacher*. Order forms accompany the catalogues; additional copies are available from Learning Resources and Technology Division on request. Print information in support of specific resources is held and distributed by Learning Resources and Technology Division in the same manner. Regular updates are available over Internet using a web browser addressed to **Http://rs6000.nshpl.library.ns.ca/lrt/.** In addition, educators are invited to join our automated list. Send an electronic mail message to **listserv@rs6000.nshpl.library.ns.ca** and say only **subscribe lrt-update {your.first.name} {your.last.name}.** You will receive postings related to the use of educational technology in support of learning and teaching.

2. Media Production

Learning Resources and Technology Division operates a Media Production Unit which creates original learning resources in support of all programs of the department, including special education. Learning Resources and Technology Division staff usually contribute to the planning of non-print resources from the earliest stages of their development. Access to the photographic, graphic design, audio and video capabilities of the Production Unit is generally via requests from other divisions of the department. District school boards or teachers with production suggestions should contact the relevant curriculum consultants in the Program Branch.

3. Technology Demonstration Centre and Classroom

Teachers and curriculum staff may arrange to visit the Technology Demonstration Centre at the Learning Resources and Technology Division, 3770 Kempt Road, Halifax, to try out and evaluate a variety of microcomputer, multimedia, CD-ROM and laser-video resources intended for use in grades P-12. A limited range of adaptive devices is available including Adaptive Firmware Card, Speech Synthesizer

and alternative input devices. Although not a lending library, software may be borrowed for use in district in-service programs. The Technology Assessment Development Centre (TADC) located at the Institute of Technology, Nova Scotia Community College, Halifax, may also be consulted regarding occupational related adaptations.

4. Educational Software Report

A *Detailed Report of Educational Software Evaluations* is distributed annually to all schools. The *Report* lists software which is available from the Nova Scotia School Book Bureau. In addition, comments are provided on titles which are at various stages of evaluation. Teachers are invited to participate in the software evaluation process. Regular updates are available over Internet using a web browser addressed to **http://rs6000.nshpl.library.ns.ca/lrt/eval.html**.

5. Network Nova Scotia

The Distance Education Network consists of audio-graphic systems at 17 Community College sites, in eight high schools, three COMM-NET (operated by UCCB), Learning Resources and Technology, universities and several community sites. This network is available without charge for in-service training, and delivery of courses at the public school, college and university level.

6. Teleconferences

Learning Resources and Technology Division operates a satellite teleconference downlink at its premises. The conference facilities associated with this downlink are available to Nova Scotian educators, in sites in Sydney and Halifax, who wish to participate in professional development or other training broadcast over satellite. Forthcoming teleconferences of interest to educators in special education are communicated to school districts' special services supervisors through the Divisions of Student Services and/or Learning Resources and Technology Division. Educators wishing to propose participation in a forthcoming satellite teleconference should contact the office of the Director, Learning Resources and Technology Division.

7. Technology Recycling Program

In co-operation with NovaKnowledge and others interested in information technology in education, the Department operates a Technology Recycling Program. Surplus computers and audio-visual equipment are refurbished and distributed to public schools through the District School Board, public libraries and limited other groups. Please contact your District Board representative for information.

Appendix vi

Appeal Procedures

1. When:
   a) a dispute occurs concerning the program plan or the process of program planning for a student with special needs; and
   b) that dispute cannot be resolved by means of the school board appeal process;

the parents, guardians or school district, may make a request, in writing, that the Minister of Education and Culture establish a Board of Appeal to provide a ruling on the program. The decision of the Board of Appeal shall be binding upon all parties to the dispute.

2. Upon receipt of a written notice, the Minister may appoint, within ten days, a Board of Appeal to hear the appeal and make a decision.

3. a) The Board of Appeal shall consist of a Chairperson and two other members, or one individual, appointed by the Minister.
   b) The Board of Appeal shall make a decision concerning the program plan of the student with special needs.
   c) The Board of Appeal shall determine the costs of the appeal to be paid by each party.

4. The Chairperson of the Board of Appeal:
   a) shall fix a time and a place for the hearing within the school district, if possible;
   b) may request an advance copy of records and documentation that are to be submitted as evidence at the hearing;
   c) may request the names of persons who will be called to give evidence.

5. The place in which the hearing takes place shall not be a public court and no person shall be permitted to be present other than the parties, their counsel or other representatives and such other persons as the Chairperson may require or permit to be present.

6. a) The parties concerned may be represented by counsel or any other person at the hearing.
   b) The Chairperson may adjourn any hearing at any time and from time to time.
   c) The Board of Appeal shall observe the confidentiality of all documents and records.
   d) All questions arising during a hearing respecting procedure, or admissibility of evidence shall be determined by the Chairperson.

7. Upon completion of a hearing, the Board of Appeal may:
   a) order appropriate changes to the program plan for the student; or
   b) remit the matter to the school board for determination.

8. The program plan for a student on whose behalf an appeal is made shall not be varied before the Board of Appeal has made its decision, unless by agreement of the parties.

9. An order made by a Board of Appeal shall be final and binding upon all parties to the dispute. The decision of the Chairperson shall be forwarded to the Minister.

Appendix vii

Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA)

Organizational Structure

Board of Directors:
APSEA is governed by a Board of Directors of twelve persons - three from each province. A deputy minister of education from each province is a permanent member of the Board. The two additional members from each province are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council for two-year terms. The Board is responsible for overall planning and policy.

Programs and Services
School districts are recognized as the jurisdiction having responsibility for the education of the school age population. Programs and services offered by APSEA are designed to support school districts in their service to the hearing impaired, the visually impaired, and the deaf/blind. The extent to which APSEA programs and services are utilized by individual provinces is dependent on the needs of each province.

APSEA supports a service delivery system which makes it possible for each child to receive an appropriate educational program designed to meet the child's individual needs. APSEA's service delivery system includes a variety of educational settings and supports for students from preschool to grade 12.

Programs and services for the hearing impaired and visually impaired are offered through a resource centre located in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Appendix viii

Competencies: Teachers of Students with Special Needs (Resource/Special Education)

The following competencies were adapted from the CEC *Common Core Knowledge and Skills Essential for All Beginning Special Education Teachers* (1992). While not exhaustive, it is intended as a guide to consider when hiring and evaluating teachers of students with special needs.

I. Foundations of Special Education Practice

- knowledge of provincial and school board policies, guidelines and procedures and the rights and responsibilities of parents, students, teachers and schools as they relate to individuals with special needs.

II. Characteristics of Learners

- understands educational implications of various cognitive, physical, cultural, social and emotional conditions of students with special needs.

III. Assessment and Evaluation

- uses a variety of assessment approaches in making programming decisions (e.g. curriculum-based, observations, interviews, work samples);
- interprets and reports assessment results with parents, administrators and other professionals;
- evaluates the ongoing effect of instructional strategies, modifications and supports.

IV. Instructional Content and Practice

- selects and adapts instructional strategies to meet student needs;
- develops and implements comprehensive individualized program plans;
- conducts ongoing self-evaluation of instruction;
- uses strategies and techniques for facilitating the functional integration of students with special needs in a variety of settings;
- incorporates evaluation, planning, and management procedures which match learner needs with instructional environments.

V. Communication and Partnerships

- uses collaborative strategies in working with students, parents, and school and community personnel in various learning environments.

VI. Professionalism and Ethical Practices

- demonstrates positive regard for the culture, religion, gender, and sexuality of students;

- promotes and maintains a high level of competence and integrity in the practice of the profession.

Speech-Language Pathologists

For speech-language pathologists hired after 1986, possession of a post-graduate degree in the field of speech-language pathology or communication disorders is required, as well as certification by the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists. This degree should include university courses in theory and practical education in areas such as:

- phonological development and disorders
- normal language development
- childhood language disorders
- voice and voice pathology
- audiology and aural rehabilitation
- neuroanatomy
- neurophysiology
- speech science
- fluency
- augmentative and alternative communication.

School Psychologists

For school psychologists hired after 1984, possession of a master's or equivalent degree in psychology that is acceptable to the Board of Examiners and possesses at least six years of supervised professional experience in the field in a manner satisfactory to the Board or a doctoral degree and 2 years of supervised professional experience in the field in a manner satisfactory to the Board are required for certification. (Psychologist Act 1980, c. 14, 5.1)

Appendix ix

Sample Resource Teacher Role

Inherent within the student-centred approach is the need for consistent involvement of school staff in a collaborative process. While each school has its own characteristics, there are, within the context of collaboration, readily identifiable common aspects of the role of the resource teacher as a member of the school team. These include:

- contributing to the assessment of the student by ascertaining how the student learns;
- discovering how the student learns best by teaching/tutoring over a period of time;
- assisting teachers in selecting and adapting instructional strategies to meet student needs;
- contributing to the development, the implementation, and the evaluation of program plans for students with special needs;
- assisting students, teachers and parents in examining available options;
- exchanging pertinent information with other teachers, that addresses the needs of particular learners in various classroom settings and curriculum areas;
- sharing the responsibility with other team members, in relation to specific students who have been referred to his/her attention, for locating or designing the needed educational materials that will support the successful implementation of individualized program plans;
- consulting and collaborating with other professionals when needed.

These elements will occur in different combinations from school to school, depending on the school's own needs and its district's policy.

Adapted from: Draft Report: *The Resource Teacher in a Changing Education System. A Collaborative Endeavour.* Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1991.

Appendix x

Sample Program Plans

The Colchester-East Hants District School Board
P.O. Box 975, Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 5G8

Individual Educational Plan

STUDENT:	DOB:
SCHOOL:	
PLACEMENT:	
CLASSROOM TEACHER:	DATE OF I.E.P.
SUPPORT PERSONNEL:	
STRENGTHS:	
AREAS NEEDING DEVELOPMENT:	
AREAS OF INDIVIDUALIZATION:	
PROGRAM GOALS:	

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND MATERIALS:

I.E.P. REVIEW AND UPDATE:

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE:

PARENT'S SIGNATURE:

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Canadian Constitution (1981)

Publications Canada
Box 1986
Station B
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6G6

CASE Future Agenda for Special Education: Creating a Unified Education System, 1993.

Council of Administrators of Special Education
615 – 16th Street NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104

CEC Policy on Inclusive Schools and Community Settings, (1993).

The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Publications Canada
Box 4554
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3Y3

Compton, Carolyn. A Guide to 75 Tests for Special Education. Belmont, California: Fearon Education, 1984.

Declaration of the Rights of a Child (1959)

c/o United Nations Association in Canada
63 Sparke Street
808 Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5A6

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New Roles & Responsibilities to Support Student Success. Nova Scotia Department of Education & Culture. June 1995.

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Health and the Solicitor General
Province of British Columbia

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323 Chapel Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7Z2

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Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2S9

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P.O. Box 578
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 2S9

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Departments of Education, Health and Community Services
Province of New Brunswick

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Nova Scotia Department of Education
P.O. Box 578
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 2S9

The Knowledge and Skills Needed by Master Teachers in the Area of Assessment (1993); Policy Statement by the Council for Exceptional Diagnostic Services: A Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.
Feder Facts
The Nova Scotia Federation of the Council of Exceptional Children
c/o 244 Chester Avenue
Kentville, N.S.
B4N 2J5

The Nova Scotia Student Cumulative Record Folder, (1988)
Nova Scotia Department of Education
P.O. Box 578
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 2S9

The Working Forum on Inclusive Schools, Creating Schools for all Our Students: What 12 Schools Have to Say, CEC, 1994.

Transition Planning in Nova Scotia, (1994).
Nova Scotia Department of Education
P.O. Box 578
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 2S9

Wang, M., Reynolds, M., and Walberg, H. Learner Characteristics and Adaptive Education. Elmsford, New York: Pergamon Press, 1987.

Young Offenders Act

Department of Justice
Research and Development Directorate
Justice Building
239 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H8

Appendix vi

Appeal Procedures

Board of Appeal—Special Education

53 Where a dispute has occurred between the parent of a student with special needs and the school board respecting the proposed or existing individualized program plan for the student, and the dispute

(a) concerns

(i) outcomes of the proposed plan, or

(ii) placement of the student; and

(b) has not been resolved by means of the school board appeal process,

the parent or school board may make a request in writing to the Minister asking the Minister to establish a Board of Appeal to provide a ruling on the program.

54 Upon receipt of a written request, the Minister may, as soon as practicable, appoint a Board of Appeal to hear the appeal and make a decision.

55 **(1)** A Board of Appeal shall consist of three members:

(a) one member, who is not an employee or school board member of the school board, named by the school board;

(b) one member, who is not a parent or relative of the student, named by the parent; and

(c) one member appointed by the Minister.

(2) The member of a Board of Appeal appointed by the Minister shall be the chair.

(3) A Board of Appeal shall make a decision concerning the dispute in respect of which the Board of Appeal was requested to be established under Section 53.

56 The chair of a Board of Appeal shall fix a time and place for the hearing and may request, in advance of the hearing,

(a) records and documentation that are to be submitted as evidence at the hearing; and

(b) the names of persons who will be called to give evidence.

57 The hearing of an appeal shall not be open to the public and no person will be permitted to be present other than the parties, their counsel and such other persons as the chair may require or permit to be present.

58 **(1)** The parties concerned may be represented at a hearing by counsel or any other person permitted at the hearing by the Board of Appeal pursuant to Section 57.

(2) The chair may adjourn any hearing at any time and from time to time.

(3) A Board of Appeal shall observe the confidentiality of all documents and records.

(4) The chair shall determine all questions arising during a hearing respecting procedure, or admissibility of evidence.

59 **(1)** Upon completion of a hearing, a Board of Appeal may, respecting the matters with which a dispute may be concerned pursuant to subclauses 53(a)(i) and (ii),

(a) confirm the program plan for the student; or

(b) order modification of the program plan for the student;

and

(c) order costs respecting the appeal to be apportioned between the school board and the parent.

60 A program plan for a student on whose behalf an appeal is made shall not be varied before a Board of Appeal has made its decision, unless by agreement of the parties.

61 **(1)** The decision of a Board of Appeal shall

(a) be written by the chair; and

(b) include reasons.

(2) The decision and the order of a Board of Appeal shall be made and delivered to the parties and the Minister within 90 days, or as soon thereafter as practicable, from the date of appointment of the Board of Appeal.

(3) An order made by a Board of Appeal shall be final and binding upon all parties to the dispute.